"Stress, Anxiety, Depression and Mental Health Among College Student of Silchar City in Assam"

Rajdeep Misra

Enrollment Number: 225034271

Ph.D. Scholar (Distance Education)

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ABSTRACT

The prevalence of stress, anxiety, and depression among college students has become a growing concern, impacting their academic performance, personal well-being, and overall quality of life. These abstract reviews the current literature on these mental health challenges, focusing on their causes, effects, and potential interventions. Factors contributing to mental health issues in this demographic include academic pressure, financial strain, social adjustment, and lifestyle changes. The consequences are multifaceted, ranging from impaired academic performance and decreased social engagement to severe mental health crises. This review highlights the need for comprehensive mental health support systems, including counselling.

INTRODUCTION

Student reacts to college in a variety of ways. For some students college is stressful because it is an abrupt change from high school. For others separation from home is a source of stress. Although some source of stress is necessary for personal growth to occur, the amount of stress can overwhelm a student and affect the ability to cope.

Another source of stress is the difficulty of achieving social intimacy .Fear academic failure is a definite Stressor (Spiel Berger CD, 1983, Kendall et al. 1965) Kumarswamy (1989) also found that stress was more in Second year medical students and this may be due to greater fear of not attaining their goal of being a doctor.

A cross institutional study found stress the top of health problem which worried students most, followed by body image, AIDS, physical fitness and cancer (Delene & Brogowich, 1990).

The Stanford Survey found psychological distress to be extremely common among the students.   1 out of 3 described themselves as anxious or tense. As far as depression is concerned, 1 in 5 described themselves as "tired without any apparent reason". 43 percent said sometimes felt "so depressed it is hard for them to get going" and 16 percent reported feeling that life is not worth living (Martinez & Fabiano, 1992).

Taking into considerations of several articles published on the psychological distress of college students, one can safely conclude that 20 to 25 percentage of student population worldwide suffering from psychological distress

Stress is any situation that evokes negative thoughts and feelings in a person. Stressful events can be appraised by individual as "Challenging" or "threatening" (Lazarus, 1966).

Student represents the society's investment for future. Their mental health and wellbeing are important not only in its own right but also as a factor contributing to the larger society's well-being.

On the other hand, there are many studies about the barriers to academic achievement in terms of mental disorders. These studies linked to serious emotional disturbance conclude that any diagnosable mental disorder severely disrupts social, academic, and emotional functioning. Over the last ten years researches have proved that adolescent students in high schools or in upper ages in colleges who are suffering from serious mental disorders (such as depression, anxiety disorders, suicidal behavior, psychosocial stress, substance and alcohol use and abuse, and post-traumatic stress disorder) do not have good academic competence as compared to their normal peers (President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health, 2003)

STRESS

Stress is an inevitable concomitant of organizational life. Its source in an organization is task or role related. An organization, being a network of roles performed in interconnected positions, is dynamic in nature. The complex and dynamic environment of organization adds to further stress at work.

ANXIETY

 Anxiety may be defined as an emotional state in which physiological and psychological indications like rapid tremor in the limbs, sweating of hands, flushing of the face and neck, heart palpitations, blood pressure, inability to sit still, pacing the room, chain smoking, tenseness, restlessness etc. are clearly visible. It has been studied as a motivational variable which interferes with academic achievement. Anxiety as a normal phenomenon does not act as an energizer or drive to outperform activities and achieve our goals. A moderate amount

of anxiety may prove beneficial and thereby improve one's performance but as a pathological phenomenon, it impairs the capacity to think and act freely, and harm our state of mind.

DEPRESSION

Depression is described as a bunch of symptoms portrayed by sadness and "a loss of interest in everyday activities" (American Psychiatric Association, 1994) Depression is a mental disorder that involves body, mood, and thoughts. It is defined as a persistent mood disturbance, plus at least four of the following: sleep disturbance, changes in psychomotor activity, loss of ability to experience pleasure and interest, fatigue, feelings of worthlessness or guilt, difficulty in concentrating, and preoccupation with death or a wish to die (American Psychiatric Association, 1987) It affects the way one feels about him/her self and he/she can suffer from low-self esteem. The way of eating and sleeping can change in depressed people, too. He/she might have a hard time getting out of bed and sleep too much. Symptoms can last for months or years if not treated. The symptoms of depression might differ from one person to next. Someone with a sense of despair can have a difficult time with concentration and decision-making. Gloom and self-criticism are all common. With a more intense depression, people can have self- destructive thoughts.

MENTAL HEALTH

Mental health is indispensable for a good quality of life and thus needs to be addressed a§ an important component of improving overall health and well- being (Anand, S.P. (2014).

"Mental health is a term which defined as the state of an individual with high emotional stability, well adjustment in the society, adequate perception of reality, self concept, integrated personality and environmental competencies" (Bhargava and Raina, 2011).

"Mental health is the ability to adjust satisfactorily to the various strains of the environment that we meet in life and mental hygiene is the means to assure the adjustment". –(Norman E. Cuts 2011)

REVIEWS OF RELATED LITERATURE

Following are some reviews of related literature for the proposed study:

Studies on Anxiety

Singh and Kumar (2016) conducted a Study on the Relationship between Anxiety and Educational Achievement to 200 male graduate students. Sinha's comprehensive anxiety scale was used to measure the anxiety. The total marks obtained in high school and intermediate examinations were taken as measures of educational achievement. The inter-correlations show that there is negative relationship between anxiety and educational achievement. It means that anxiety has negative effect on educational achievement. There is a difference between the average achievement scores of low and high anxious students. The t-values indicate that low anxious students achieve better in comparison to high anxious students, so far as their educational achievement is concerned.

Gupta (2015) conducted a study to find out the relationship between anxiety and achievement with respect to economic status. The low anxiety group had higher mean achievement motivation than the high anxiety group but the difference was not significant girls were more anxious than boys. Correlation between anxiety and achievement motivation in all the groups having low academic achievement was negative irrespective of socio-economic status.

Kumari K.V, (2015) has studied some correlates of academic achievement of school students. The study reveal that academic achievement is negative related to anxiety and positively related to achievement motivation. The main effects of the three variables, anxiety, achievement motivation and sex on academic achievement is significant and the interaction effect of anxiety and sex as well as achievement motivation and sex are significant on academic achievement.

Studies on depression

Fosterling and Binser (2012) investigated the link between depression and school performance among high college students. High depression scores were associated with low overall grades. The authors found that pupils with low grades and pupils who are depressed attributed failure to internal, stable and global cause‟s more than high achievers and non-depressed pupils did. These findings demonstrated the vicious cycle that exists between depression and low grades, creating a downward spiral towards worsening mental health and failing grades.

Marmorstein (2011) looked at the association between major depressive disorder and/or conduct disorder and school adjustment. The subjects were twin adolescent girls. The results of this study suggested that both depression and conduct disorder were related to significant difficulties in functioning and school adjustment. Each disorder alone was related to increased number of negative school related events such as suspension and failure of classes. A dual diagnosis of MDD and CD was associated with the highest level of school impairment.

Betsy &Finger (2006) examined the relationship between depression and academic performance among school students. The study followed a negative correlation between depression and grade point average; it wanted to know that participants who had a higher score on the BDI would be more likely to view their current academic performance as unsatisfactory, regardless of a high or low grade point average (GPA) The first hypothesis regarding participant's scores on the BDI and their GPA was not supported.

Studies on stress

Eremsoy, Celimi and Gencoz (2015) carried out a study to find out the associated variables of depression and anxiety symptoms for young adults confronted with an academic stress. Ninety-two graduate students, who were actively involved in preparing their thesis,

participated in this study. Two regression analyses were conducted to see different variables associated with depression and anxiety symptoms separately. Consistent with the expectations, depression and anxiety had over lapping predictors, such as negative automatic thoughts and hopelessness. However, adequacy of problemsolving abilities seemed to be associated with anxiety symptoms.

Eric, Stewart, and Enedima (2012) investigated two factors associated with academic achievement: acculturation and social support. The sample consisted of 60 ninth-grade students of Mexican decent in a southwestern school district. Results indicated that students identified as highly integrated and strongly Anglo-oriented bicultural tended to have higher academic achievement. Social support was perceived as a whole from all four sources. Although no generational effects were identified, females tended to have higher Grade Point Average (GPAs), and perceived more social support, while the males, interestingly, were slightly more acculturated. People high in resourcefulness are purported to be better than others at controlling their negative emotions and managing stressful tasks. Akgun and Ciarrochi (2003) hypothesized that highly resourceful students would be more effective than others at protecting themselves from the adverse effects of academic stress, and not allowing that stress to impact their grades.

Mental health

In an investigation was conducted on emotional intelligence as predictor of mental health among chronic disease group by Manju (2016). Sample of the study comprised of 200 chronic patients. Multidimensional Measure of Emotional Intelligence (MMEI by C.R. Darolia, 2003) and General Health Questionnaire (GHQ by Goldberg & Williams, 1988) was used to collect data from patients. Data were analyzed using correlation and regression analysis. Results of this study revealed that emotional intelligence is positively and significantly correlated with mental health and emerged as predictor of mental health.

A study was conducted on emotional intelligence and selected personality characteristics of student teachers. Sample of 200 students teachers were randomly selected from 4 different colleges located in Guntur and Vijayawada city. Tools are used emotional intelligence developed by prof.N.K.Chadha and Dr. Dalip Singh. Major findings of the study were: 1. Females have a slightly higher emotional intelligence than male student teachers. 2. Urban student teachers have higher emotional intelligence than rural student teachers Amudha asaph (2016).

There was a study on the deterioration in interest as a function of insecure mental health during and after the period of certain academic specialization by Bhan (2012). The sample was drawn from students for M.A. or M.Sc. and from the persons who settled down in life after passing M.A/M.Sc. In all 1300 persons formed the sample of the study. This included 800 in course and 500 after-course persons. They were administered the Maslow's security

insecurity inventory, the Raychawdhury interest survey, the Rorschach psycho diagnostic test and the non directive interview schedule. Major findings of the study were: 1. Interest in outdoor and physical activities deteriorated in the case of in course group due to insecurity of mental health. 2. Interest fields which were not found to deteriorate in the case of after course group due to insecurity of mental health were scientific interest and domestic interest. 3. Security-insecurity was a stable characteristic of personality and was caused by long standing factors which affected from early childhood.

RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

Student reacts to college in a variety of ways. For some students, college is stressful because it is an abrupt change from high school. For others separation from home is a source of stress. Although some source of stress is necessary for personal growth to occur, the amount of stress can overwhelm a student and affect the ability to cope. Another source of stress is the difficulty of achieving social intimacy .Fear academic failure is a definite Stressor (Spiel Berger CD, 1983, Kendall et al. 1965) Kumarswamy (1989) also found that stress was more in Second year medical students and this may be due to greater fear of not attaining their goal of being a doctor. Several studies reported Medical students experience more stress

METHODOLOGY

Research Problem

The research problem is **A STUDY ON STRESS, ANXIETY, DEPRESSION AND MENTAL HEALTH AMONG COLLEGE STUDENT OF SILCHAR CITY IN ASSAM**

Research Method

Evaluative research technique of Descriptive Research design will be employed.

Objective

The following objectives are formulated for the present study: -

To study the stress, anxiety and depression and mental health among male and female students

To study the relationship between stress, anxiety and depression and mental health among students.

Hypotheses of the study

The following hypotheses are formulated for the present study: -

1.   There will be significant difference in male students' stress, anxiety and depression and mental health than female students.

2.   There will be positive relationship between stress, anxiety, depression and mental health among nursing students.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF THE KEY TERMS

1. Anxiety:

Anxiety is an emotional characterized by feelings of tension, worried thoughts and physical changes like increased blood pressure. People with anxiety usually have recurring intrusive thoughts or concerns. They may avoid certain situation out of worry.

2. Stress:

Stress can be defined as, any change in the body's equilibrium. Any negative stress is also known as distress. Distress occurs when while performing a task or throughout a day to day activity tension builds up, there is no longer any fun in it and there seems to be no relief. This may lead to poor decision making. The general characteristics of the person in distress are, over-aroused, tense, unable to relax, touchy, easily upset, irritable, easily startled, nervy, jumpy, fidgety and intolerant of interruption or delay.

Population

Students of Silchar city in Assam region will constitute the population of the study for the present investigation. Further the student having an age group of 18 to 22 years will be selected for the present study.

Sample

The present study consists of 200 college students of Silchar city in Assam. Out of which 100 will be male and 100 will be female. The sample will be selected by using simple random sampling technique.

Inclusion or Exclusion

Only college students of Silchar city in Assam will be included in the study.

Only 200 students will be included in the study.

The age group of the sample will be restricted to 18 to 22 years only.

Disabled children will be excluded from the study

Sampling Technique: purposive technique will be adopted to draw the sample.

Tool used for data collection

Depression Anxiety and Stress Scales (DASS):

Depression Anxiety and Stress Scales (DASS) developed by Lovibond and Lovibond (1995), is a widely used screening tool to assess symptoms of depression, anxiety, and stress in community settings. This instrument comprises three sub-scales: (1) the Depression sub-scale which measures hopelessness, low self-esteem, and low positive affect; (2) the Anxiety scale which assesses autonomic arousal, musculo-skeletal symptoms, situational anxiety and subjective experience of anxious arousal; and (3) the Stress scale which assesses tension, agitation, and negative affect (Lovibond, 1995). There are two forms of the DASS, the full 42-item and the short 21-item versions. Both assess the same domains. DASS21-V as a single scale has good internal reliability and is sensitive to detect common mental

disorders. Overall, the DASS 21-V is a comprehensible and psychometrically sound tool which can be used in primary health care (Tran et al., 2013).

Reliability of the total scale in terms of internal consistency as measured by Cronbach"s Alpha and Spearman-Brown coefficient is 0.81 and 0.89. The obtained reliability for anxiety, depression and stress subscales as measured by Cronbach"s Alpha is 0.76, 0.75 and 0.61 respectively.

Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS)

The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS) was developed by researchers at the Universities of Warwick and Edinburgh, with funding provided by NHS Health Scotland, to enable the measurement of mental well-being of adults by Professor Sarah Stewart-Brown and Dr Kulsum Janmohamed in 2008. WEMWBS is a 14 item scale with 5 response categories, summed to provide a single score ranging from 14-70. The items are all worded positively and cover both feeling and functioning aspects of mental wellbeing. WEMWBS aims to measure mental well-being itself and not the determinants of mental well-being, which include resilience, skills in relationship, conflict management and problem solving, as well as socioeconomic factors such as poverty, domestic violence, bullying, unemployment, stigma, racism and other forms of social exclusion. It has been translated into a number of languages including Hindi Language and has been validated both psychometrically and qualitatively. It also has undergone back translations into Hindi and is freely available to download, with the condition of using it without any change and proper acknowledgment.

WEMWBS scoring

WEMWBS is very simple to score. The total score is obtained by summing the score for each of the 14 items. The latter ranges from 1 – 5 and the total score from 14-70. Higher scores represent better mental health.

Presenting the results

WEMWBS results were presented as a mean score for the population of interest with either a standard deviation or 95% confidence interval. The latter both provide a measure of variance of the scores in the population studied (either as a whole or for sub-groups within it).

Interpreting the results

The average population mean is around 51 and that this varies according to the population group studied. The mean score for the population under study can be compared with these provisional population norms to assess whether the level of mental well-being is above or below this level. Differences between the scores of different groups or between the scores of the same group of people at two points in time, for example, before and after an intervention, need to be tested statistically using students t-Test or equivalent to assess how likely the

differences are to have arisen by chance. At any given level of difference results are more likely to be significant if the groups being compared are large and less likely if the groups are small.

Procedure for Data Collection

To ensure better response, co-operation, genuine interest and personal contact, the investigator will go personally to each school. Principals of the colleges will be contacted and their help will be sought for the administration of the tools and collection of data and dates will be fixed for the collection of data. The investigator will try his best to build a report with all respondents. All the two set of tests will be given to each student and the instructions will be given to the students so that they can finish up their tests at right time and without facing any problem.

Statistical Analysis

In this proposed study, various statistical tool and techniques will be used according to the requirement of the study. Percentage, Mean, S.D., t-test and Pearson Coefficient of correlation will be calculated.

T test will be used to study the significant difference in male and female students with respect to stress, anxiety, depression and mental health.

Further, Pearson product moment correlation will be used to study the relationship between stress, anxiety, depression and mental health of students.

CONCLUSION

College students often experience significant stress, anxiety, and depression due to various factors like academic pressures, social challenges, and life transitions. This mental health strain can impact their overall well-being and academic performance. Effective strategies for managing these issues include increasing awareness, providing accessible mental health resources, and fostering supportive environments. Institutions can play a crucial role by implementing counseling services, promoting work-life balance, and encouraging open discussions about mental health. Addressing these factors holistically can improve students' mental health and enhance their college experience.

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"Stress, Anxiety, Depression and Mental Health Among College Student of Silchar City in Assam"

Published in 'Shiksha Samvad' Peer-Reviewed and Refereed Research Journal and E-ISSN: 2584-0983(Online), Volume-02, Issue-01, Month September, Year- 2024, Impact-Factor, RPRI-3.87.

Dr. Neeraj Yadav
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